CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

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1. A method in a data processing system for preventing exchange of viruses, the method comprising:

maintaining preexisting content for a device in a first location;

placing new data associated with the device in a second location, wherein the new information is an update to the preexisting content;

combining the preexisting data and the new content in a third location to form merged content; and

performing a check for viruses on the merged content prior to performing a transfer of the new content.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

sending the merged content to the device if a virus is absent from the merged content.

3. The method of claim A1 further comprising:

storing the merged content as the preexisting content if a virus is absent from the merged content.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the device is a wireless device.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the device is one of a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, a wireless telephone, and a personal computer.

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6. The method of claim 1, wherein the first location is a hard disk drive in the data processing system.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the first location is a hard disk drive in a storage system remote to the data processing system.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the third location is a random access memory in the data processing system.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the steps of placing, maintaining, and performing are initiated in response to a synchronization process between the data processing system and the device.

10. A method in a data processing system for preventing transmission of viruses, comprising the steps of:

receiving a request to synchronize a device;

identifying new content associated with the device;

combining the new content with existing content to form merged content; and

checking the merged content for viruses prior to synchronizing the device.

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11. The method of claim 10, wherein the new content is content received from the device.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein the new content is content to be sent to the device.

13. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes as set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to maintain preexisting content for a device in a first location, place new content associated with the device in a second location, wherein the new information is an update to the preexisting content, combine the preexisting content and

the new content in a third location to form merged content, and perform a check for viruses on the merged content.

14. The data processing system of claim 13, wherein the bus system includes a primary bus and a secondary bus.

15. The data processing system of claim 13, wherein the bus system comprises a single bus.

16. The data processing system of claim 13, wherein the processing unit includes a plurality of processors.

17. The data processing system of claim 13, wherein the processing unit includes a single processor.

18. A data processing system for preventing exchange of viruses, the data processing system comprising:

maintaining means for maintaining preexisting content for a device in a first location;

placing means for placing new content associated with the device in a second location, wherein the new content is an update to the preexisting content;

combining means for combining the preexisting content and the new content in a third location to form merged content; and

performing means for performing a check for viruses on the merged content prior to performing a transfer of the new content.

19. The data processing system of claim 18 further comprising:

sending means for sending the merged content to the device if a virus is absent from the merged content.

20. The data processing system of claim 18 further comprising:

storing means for storing the merged content as the preexisting content if a virus is absent from the merged content.

21. The data processing system of claim 18, wherein the device is a wireless device.

22. The data processing system of claim 18, wherein the device is one of a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, a wireless telephone, and a personal computer.

23. The data processing system of claim 18, wherein the first location is a hard disk drive in the data processing system.

24. The data processing system of claim 18, wherein the first location is a hard disk drive in a storage system remote to the data processing system.

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25. The data processing system of claim 18, wherein the third location is a random access memory in the data processing system.

26. The data processing system of claim 18, wherein the steps of placing, maintaining, and performing are initiated in response to a synchronization process between the data processing system and the device.

27. A data processing system for preventing transmission of viruses

receiving means for receiving a request to synchronize a device;

identifying means for identifying new content associated with the device;

combining means for combining the new content with existing content to form merged content; and

checking means for checking the merged content for viruses prior to synchronizing the device.

28. The data processing system of claim 27, wherein the new content is content received from the device.

29. The data processing system of claim 27, wherein the new content is content to be sent to the device.

30. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use in a data processing system for preventing exchange of viruses, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for maintaining preexisting content for a device in a first location;

second instructions for placing new content associated with the device in a second location, wherein the new information is an update to the preexisting content;

third instructions for combining the preexisting content and the new content in a third location to form merged content; and

fourth instructions for performing a check for viruses on the merged content prior to performing a transfer of the new content.

31. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use in a data processing system for preventing transmission of viruses, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for receiving a request to synchronize a device;

second instructions for identifying new content associated with the device;

third instructions for combining the new content with existing content to form merged content; and

fourth instructions for checking the merged content for viruses prior to synchronizing the device.